

# PRESS RELEASE

**Congressman John Conyers, Jr.**

**Fourteenth District, Michigan  
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary  
Dean, Congressional Black Caucus**

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 20, 2003**

**CONTACT: Scott Deutchman  
Cori Flam 202-225-6906**

**Conyers Cites FCC Decision as Evidence that  
Chairman Powell Has Taken FCC in Wrong Direction;  
Calls for Hearings to Examine FCC's Authority**

Congressman John Conyers, Jr., Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee, and Dean of the Congressional Black Caucus issued the statement below regarding the FCC's decision today regarding competition policy in the telecommunications industry:

“Chairman Powell got it wrong twice today. First, the FCC rejected Chairman Powell's efforts to deregulate the telecommunications industry at the expense of competition, better service and lower prices. Yet, the Chairman was ultimately successful in doing serious damage to our national broadband policy by deregulating the high speed internet market.

The Chairman's leadership and his desire to remonopolize the industry at the expense of competition must be questioned. We must hold hearings immediately to determine whether the Chairman's actions are consistent with the competitive framework agreed to in the Telecom Act.

I congratulate FCC Commissioners Martin, Copps and Adelstein who withstood immense pressure from Chairman Powell and the Bell companies to eliminate the Bells' obligations to lease their equipment to competitors at reasonable rates. They recognized that before we allow the Bells to have the unfettered ability to leverage their monopoly power, the Bells must first open up their local telephone markets to competition.

Regarding linesharing and fiber optic lines for broadband, the Chairman approved what the Congress rightfully rejected last year. Legislation seeking to deregulate the broadband market failed to become law despite heavy lobbying by the Bell monopolies. Yet, the FCC's ruling today has accomplished just that.

We should not allow the Chairman to give the Bells what they could not get from Congress and what the Telecom Act expressly prohibits – the right to provide broadband nationwide before opening up their local markets to competition.”

##JUD-108-2/20/03##